Impact of SA-Virgin Atlantic Deal on AI

4573. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the mega deal between Singapore Airlines and Virgin Atlantic will have a major adverse impact on the market share of the beleaguered Air India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Virgin Atlantic has been given flying rights from Air India which is in fact its rival in the region; and

(c) if so, how AI plan to meet this new challenge and threat to its profitability?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Air India has concluded an agreement with Virgin Atlantic under which the latter would be permitted to operate services between Delhi and London by using some of the unutilised traffic rights of Air India. The tie-up between Singapore Airlines and Virgin Atlantic does not in any way affect traffic rights between India and Singapore on the one hand and India and U.K. on the other. There is also no tangible reason to believe that this will have any adverse impact on Air Inida.

Role of IA and AI in Promotion of Tourism

4574. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps which are being taken up by the National Carrier i.e. Indian Airlines and Air India for the promotion of tourism in the remote corners of India, particularly in Goa and Rajasthan; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the time-frame for the above purpose?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Indian Airlines has taken concrete steps to promote tourism by introducing Holiday Packages to destinations like Karnataka and Goa. A tie up with M/s. Jungle Lodges

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking) offers exclusive packages to the holiday makers. Similarly, it has also tied up with M/s. Majorda Beach Resorts and M/s. Whispering Palms Beach Resorts Goa to offer attractive Holiday packages. Air India as the national carrier has also been actively promoting tourism into India. All efforts are made to promote all destinations in every region of the country.

Expansion of Aviation Facilities in Rajasthan

4575. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Civil Aviation facilities in Rajasthan are inadequate; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The Civil Aviation facilities are reviewed on a regular basis. At present, the Airports Authority of India is maintaing Jaipur, Udaipur and Kota airports besides Civil Enclaves at the Defence Airfields at Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Bikaner. Further, there are 26 airstrips in Rajasthan maintained by the State Government for Civil Aviation purposes.

Alliance Air (a subsidiary of Indian Airlines), Sahara Airlines and Jet Airways operate services linking important stations within and outside Rajasthan.

Haj Pilgrims

4576. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Haj pilgrims angry with AI staff" which appeared in the Pioneer dated the 31st March, 2000; and

(b) if so, the reasons for Haj pilgrims to be angry?